

REMARKS

Claims 1-42 are currently pending. Claims 1, 4, and 10-13 are rejected. Claims 2-3, 5-9, and 14-18 are objected to. Claims 19-21 are allowed. Claims 22-42 were withdrawn and are hereby canceled. Claims 4, 8, and 9 are rewritten in independent form. No fee is due for the newly independent claims.

Elections / Restrictions

Applicants confirm the election without traverse of Claims 1-21. On October 4, 2004, a telephonic interview was conducted between the Examiner and Christopher Dremann in which agreement with respect to the claims was reached. Specifically, group I (Claims 1-21) was elected for prosecution. The Office Action dated October 20, 2004 appears to contain a typographical error on page 2 where group I is identified as Claims 1-30 and Claims 22-30 are in group III. Applicants believe group I is Claims 1-21 and are responding accordingly.

Claim Objections / Rejections

Claims 1, 4, and 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Giebel et al. (US 5,863,083) (Giebel). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 2 was indicated as containing allowable subject matter and Claim 1 has been amended to recite what Applicants believe is allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse the "Allowable Subject Matter" paragraph on page 6 of the Office Action dated October 20, 2004, because Claim 2 as it was prior to the instant amendment and indicated as allowable did not include all the limitations recited in that paragraph on page 6 of the Office Action. Therefore, Applicants are not certain exactly which aspects of the recitations of Claim 2, as originally presented, the Examiner considered patentable subject matter, but are submitting Claim 1, as amended, to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, Geibel is silent with respect to a bag that is longitudinally openable.

With respect to independent Claims 4 and 10, Geibel does not describe or suggest a second housing portion defining a plurality of pockets, wherein each pocket is for storing a

plurality of the fiber optic connectors. Rather, Geibel describes slots (42) which are clearly shown as each housing only a single connector (20).

Accordingly, Claims 4 and 10 are submitted to be patentable over the cited art. Claims 11-13 depend from patentable base Claim 10, and thus, are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons.

For at least the reasons above, Applicants respectfully request that the 102 rejection of Claims 1, 4, and 10-13 be withdrawn.

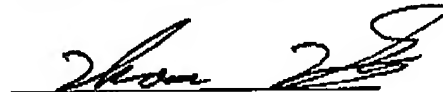
Claims 2-3, 5-9, and 14-18 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-3 depend from independent Claim 1 which is submitted to be patentable, Claims 5-7 depend from independent Claim 4 which is submitted to be patentable, Claims 8 and 9 have both been written in independent form and are submitted to be patentable, and Claims 14-18 depend from independent Claim 10 which is submitted to be patentable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claims 2-3, 5-9, and 14-18 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection(s) and the rejection(s) of the claims and to reconsider the application. This Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated October 20, 2004 and places the application in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims. Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned directly to further the prosecution of any remaining issues, and thereby expedite allowance of the application.

This Amendment does not result in more independent or total claims than paid for previously. Accordingly, no fee for excess claims is believed to be due. The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fee due in connection with the filing of this response, including any excess claims fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not already accounted for, such an extension is requested and the fee should likewise be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. Any overpayment should be credited to Deposit Account No. 19-2167.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas M. Fisher
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 47,564
P. O. Box 489
Hickory, N. C. 28603
Telephone: 828/901-6431
Facsimile: 828/901-5206

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